Fuel energy from plants

482. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that it has been invented in India to produce fuel energy from a particular plant and the plant is being cultivated in a particular State; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) Jatropha curcas (Ratanjot) has been identified as one of the promising oil seed producing plants which can be used for the production of bio-diesel. The process of producing bio-diesel from oil is well established. Bio-diesel can be blended with petroleum diesel fuel for automotive and stationary applications. The Government have taken.up a National Mission on Bio-diesel with focus on cultivation of Jatropha curcas plant in different States of the country. Under this National Mission, which is being implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, financial assistance has been provided to nine States for raising seedlings, mainly from jatropha, which would be utilized for the production of bio-diesel.

Scheme for solar water heaters

483. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have planned to popularize solar water heaters by providing subsidy through his Ministry;

(b) the number of banks and financial institutions which are being involved for the implementation of this scheme; and

(c) the total subsidy proposed for this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) A scheme for promotion of solar water heaters is being implemented through banks and financial institutions which provides for upfront interest subsidy so that loans are available at an effective interest rate of 2% to domestic users,